(c) Public expenditure by the Central Government on higher education during 2007-08 will depend on approval of the budgetary proposal by Parliament.

**Guidelines for opening higher educational institutions**

2155. SHRI BASHISTHA NARAIN SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the guidelines fixed for opening higher educational institutions in the country;

(b) if educational and social backwardness of a place is one at the parameters, whether Government would consider opening one such institution of higher education at Rohru, District Shimla, Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The universities are established or incorporated by or under a Central Act, a provincial Act or a State Act. Higher Educational requirements of all regions, in order to prevent regional imbalances, is a joint ongoing responsibility of States as well as the Central Government.

(b) and (c) Central Universities have been established/Central Legislation enacted for Manipur, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and Sikkim. There is no proposal, at present under consideration to open a Central University in Himachal Pradesh.

**Reservation for OBC students**

2156. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether reservation for OBC students in respect of admission to higher courses run by Central Universities has already come into force;

(b) if so, since when and upto which percentage;

(c) whether the OBC students getting admitted in regional college, affiliated to university run by any State, will get the benefit of reservation coming out in part (b) above; and

(d) the role of the Centre in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (d) The Central Educational Institutions (Reservation in Admission) Act, 2006 has come into force for admissions in the academic sessions commencing on or from the calendar year, 2007. The Act provides for reservation of 15% seats for the Scheduled Castes, 7.5% seats for the Scheduled Tribes and 27% seats for the OBCs. Reservation can be extended only to institutions covered by Section 2(d) of the Act. The Central Government has no role in respect of Institutions coming under the purview of States. However, article 15(5) of the Constitution empowers State Legislations also to make appropriate Laws for ensuring reservation in such institutions.

**Setting up of National Universities**

2157. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up 50 National Universities as recommended by the National Knowledge Commission;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) to (c) The National Knowledge Commission has *inter-alia* recommended establishment of 50 National Universities. The recommendations of the National Knowledge Commission are in the public domain for wider debate among all stake holder.

**Regulatory authority for standards and degrees**

2158. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no independent regulatory authority to monitor standards and degrees in universities;

(b) if so, whether it is proposed to set up one such body;